## FORWARD

JEWISH COMMUNITIES
THE WORLD OVER

One of the most popular points of interest in the little old "Wild West" town of Deadwood, South Dakota, is Mount Moriah cemetery, with the graves of such legendary figures as Wild Bill Hickock and Calamity Jane. However, visitors who explore the farther reaches of the burial ground will come upon a large section of tombstones with Hebrew inscriptions—the last resting place of the pioneer Jewish families of the Black Hills, Jews were among the earliest settlers in the area, many of whom came during the great Gold Rush of 1874. By the 1890's, Deadwood had a large number of Jewish residents who became leaders in the community. One of them, Solomon Star, was elected mayor, and Nathan Colman, lay leader of the local synagogue, became the town's judge. However, the community declined after World War 1, and the last survivor of Deadwood Jewry passed away a few months ago.

Today, a small Reform congregation, "The Synagogue of the Hills," flourishes in nearby Rapid City. Sioux Falls has two synagogues, Reform and Orthodox, and a small congregation worships in Aberdeen. The total Jewish population of the state today is 525. But despite small numbers, the local Jewish community is proud of its colorful past and the important Jewish contribution that was made in the "winning of the West."

## from where i stand

To say that Congregation Sha'ar Zahav has been going through a particularly difficult time would be bland understatement. To discuss the details again, especially in this column, would tax even the most patient of our readers and members. Instead, I would like to suggest the following few ideas, and urge your giving some time to considering them: first, while my election as rabbi of this congregation was fraught with threatened dangers to the congregation, I consciously chose to remain a candidate for the position for one reason. The reason was that I did not, nor do I now, believe that those things which have divided us for these many months would cease dividing us whether or not I was the "spiritual ! leader" of the congregation, and that as a consequence of that, the need for a rabbi to do work particularly appropriate for a rabbi, was becoming even more and more pronounced. While I believe that Sha'ar Zahav can benefit tremendously by having an employed rabbi, I can try to fill the needs of our congregation only if I know that we will be trying to solve our problems together. Second, while I was humbled and hurt by the bitterness of the debate preceding the election on March 2nd, it served the purpose of showing me that there is as much work to be done within our membership in the areas of consciousness-raising and becoming more sensitive to each others' needs as there is in our reaching out to others who are not officially a part of our congregation. Again, with your help, I will work devotedly to improve these situations. Third, it is no secret that our wounds are deep. But it is also no secret that our congregation is both young and unusual. Characteristically, congregations go through struggles like ours, (but perhaps to a lesser degree), during their first formative years, but in many of those cases, they do not face issues such as denominational differences and intergender difficulties to the extent to which we have. I am not sure that these problems will lend themselves to easy solutions; my impression is that they will not. But I do believe that these problems, and others related to them, must continue to be addressed, and solutions for them continue to be sought, or else we fall short in our attempts to meet our obligation as Jews. The problems which we face are, at the root, primordial human problems, on which rest issues such as self-respect, dignity, human worth and the responsibilities of human freedom.

These are not child's play, and I approach them with the humility that comes from knowing that I, alone, cannot even begin to fathom them in all their implications, let alone claim to have solutions for them, whether as a rabbi or as anything else. But by becoming the rabbi of this congregation, I reaffirm my commitment to work for you and with you, with all my heart, soul, and might, to mold the Judaism of our heritage into the lifeblood of our people, so that they can co-exist in happy and productive union, and still give us something recognizable of which we can be proud. I look forward to our officially working together and I'm hopeful that our relationship will lead to unprecedented growth for our congregation, both spiritually and tangibly. Come, let us walk in the light of God, and let us praise God's name together.

Allen Bennett



### INDEPENDENCE DAY FESTIVITIES SLATED MAY 6 AT STERN GROVE

The 31st birthady of the State of Israel will be celebrated here on Sunday, May 6 with a morning Walk and Run around Lake Merced and an afternoon at Stern Grove with an Israeli Fair and entertainment.

Participants in the 10 kilometer walk route will be "sent off" with a burst of balloons and music by a live band at 9:30 a.m. in Waterworks Park, 22d Ave and Sloat Blvd. From 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Stern Grove, 19th Ave and Sloat Blvd, fair goers may bring lunches or buy American and Israeli food while enjoying continuous entertainment, artists' exhibits, booths, and a variety of activities for every age

group.

This community-wide festival commerates Israel's Day of Independence in 1948 and the culmination of the 1979 Campaign of the Jewish Welfare Federation of San Francisco, Marin County and the Peninsula. The celebration is sponsored by Federation in cooperation with the Jewish community. Walk and Run "Passport Brochures" (available at Jewish Community Centers, synagogues and the Federation office) tell all necessary information about the event and contain sponsor sign-up sheets. Sponsors offer to pay a specific amount of money for each kilometer completed. Walkers and runners who want to join the Mini-walk (5 km) will register at Waterworks Park at 9:45 a.m.

A trip to Israel, a set of Encyclopedia Judaica and a 10 speed bike are some of the prizes for winners in the Walk and Run contest. All proceeds from the 31st Birthday Walk and Run will go to Tel Hanan, Israel, the "family" adopted by Federation as part of Project Renewal.



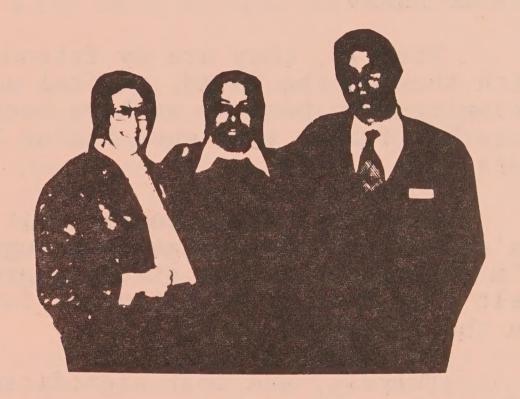
## moving again

It is probable that we will be moving again, soon! Most likely we will have to vacate Dovre Hall after the end of April as the building has been sold and the new owners are not sure of what they are going to do with it.

This has been rather sudden and a new meeting place has not been found as of press time. We will keep everyone advised and will send out a special mailing if necessary when we find a new place.

The Va'ad





Left to right. Supervisor
Carol Ruth Silver, Rabbi Allen
Bennett, Brian Lurie, Executive
Director of the Jewish Welfare
Federation of San Francisco.
Mr. Lurie was a guest speaker
after services at Sha'ar Zahav
recently, and he was introduced by Supervisor Silver.

The FORWARD needs your articles. If you would like to write a periodic column or just a single article of general interest to the congregation for publication in the FORWARD, please contact me. I can be reached at home 552-6976, or see me at services. The FORWARD and the congregation will be most appreciative.

Ellis Jacobs

## from a co-leader

For many months, the Editor has been trying to get me to write an article for the Forward. My not having written was probably composed of equal parts of lack of inspiration and procrastination. Now, however, I must overcome my tendency to delay because I am compelled to personally react to two significant events in our Synagogue's history: the recent resignations from the Va'ad, our Steering Committee, and the appointment of Alan Bennett as our Rabbi.

For several reasons, I feel great sorrow over the fact that Bernard, Sarah, Penny, Sandy, Lauren and Roger felt compelled to leave their leadership positions in Sha'ar Zahav.

Firstly, they are my friends and I enjoyed working with them on the Va'ad. I feel a special loss at Bernard's stepping-down because we have been working and fighting together from a time when Sha'ar Zahav was merely a good idea.

Secondly, they clearly felt that their tenure on the Va'ad was one of increasing struggle and pressure -- and I'm saddened that the struggle grew to a point where they felt that further activity was futile and too great a drain on their energy.

Thirdly, and most significantly, are the implications of the basic issues that underlie these resignations: the feelings that Sha'ar Zahav is male-dominated, sexist, and in the process of becoming an "establishment" congregation. It has always seemed clear to me that Sha'ar Zahav, as an organization with both women and men in leadership positions, had a "built-in" inequality because of the more domineering attitudes of the men. One woman expressed the feeling that she'd never been in a mixed-sex organization where the women didn't have to continually struggle to keep from being overwhelmed by the men. I've always felt that this was due, to a great extent, to the roles into which men and women are socialized during childhood. Although there were few overt expressions of sexism -- and indeed many efforts were made by men to eliminate sexism, most notably in our liturgy -the attitudes of many men were offensive to women in the congregation. Because of their non-specific nature, these attitudinal problems have been very difficult to deal with both by women and men. The only way to even begin to have a resolution of them is to actively encourage continued non-vituperative dialogue.

Since Sha'ar Zahav's formation, it's become more obvious to me that our Synagogue can't "be all things to all people". As gays and lesbians, we continually try to convince non-gay people that we gays aren't a monolithic or (you should pardon the expression) a homogeneous group. Our common sexual orientation isn't enough to overcome differences of economics, life-style, politics, etc. It's pretty clear that in whatever direction Sha'ar Zahav goes, there will be unhappy people. I'll always object to Sha'ar Zahav becoming as stuffy as some "main line" congregations (though I don't think it could be even if some wanted it to be so) but I firmly believe that without some sort of structure, we can accomplish very little. The degree to which this structure is developed will be a subject of continued debate.

The "rabbi issue" involved both of these areas -sexism and establishmentarianism. The partisans and opponents of our having a rabbi lined up on both sides of these
areas. There were numerous instances of excessive and
deplorable behavior on both sides. There was a distinct
lack -- on both sides -- of calm, rational and civilized
discussion of the matter. It would be to our credit to
"draw-back" and to assess recent occurances as dispassionately as possible.

Alan is now our rabbi and it will be a mutual duty -both his and ours -- to heal wounds and to strive to create
a congregation meeting the needs of Jewish lesbians and gay
men. Let us work together to realize the goals that Sha'ar
Zahav has set for itself.

Daniel Chesir Co-leader



**Outreach Program** 

Bernard Jordan (left) and Thea Cerf (right) stand with Tad Dunlap, a member of Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, during the temple's first "Mitzvah Outreach" program, a shabbat celebration at the Jewish Home for the Aged. Jordan and Mrs. Cerf are Home residents.

## pesach

Pesach, usually called Passover, is first in the calendar of Jewish festivals. It is the greatest of Jewish festivals. For over two thousand years it has been more than a holiday; it has been the holiday, the festival of redemption.

In addition, Pesach is the oldest of Jewish festivals. Jews observed it in the most ancient of times, in the days when they were still nomadic shepherds in the wilderness.

Pesach is the Jewish spring festival. It begins on the eve of the fourteenth day of the Jewish month Nisan. Originally it was a seven-day festival and is so observed today in Palestine and among Reform Jews, with only the first and seventh days as days of rest. Due, however, to the unsettled state of the Jewish calendar in olden times the festival was extended to last eight days amongst Jews not resident in Palestine. The full holiday, with cessation of work, is observed only the first two and the last two days of the festival. The four intervening days are semi-holidays.

Make a note on your calendar of the following items of interest:

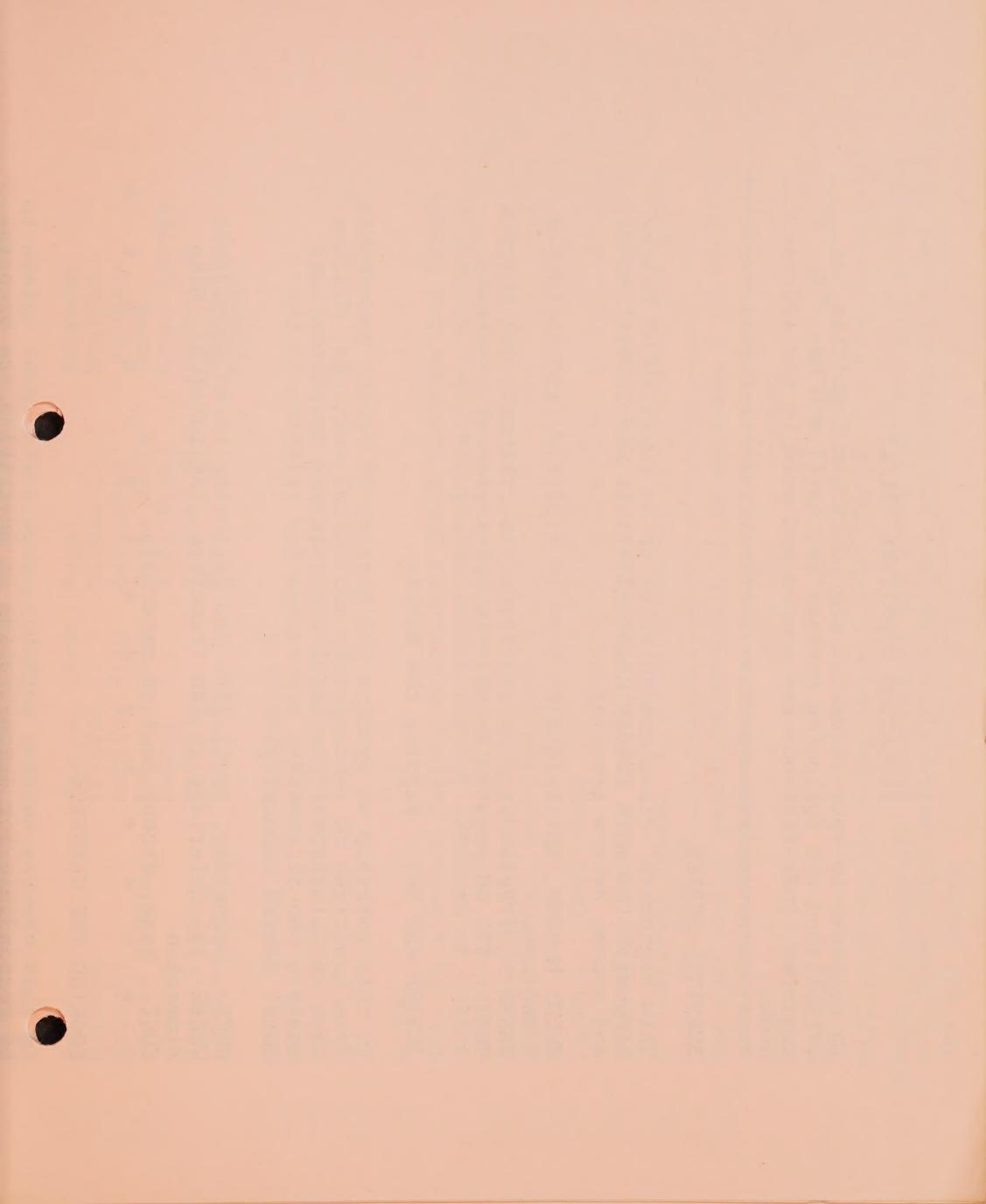
April 22 - A jog at Stow Lake

May 6 - The Haight Street Fair

May 20 - Angel Island picnic

June 1 - Torah Rededication

June 2 - Party (more details later)



## EDUCATION COMMITTEE BULLETIN

register, just fill out the coupon and mail to the address In response to your requests, the Education Committee has established the following courses for April and May.

## SURVIVAL HEBREW

language, the main Friday night blessings and Sabbath songs, This beginners' class concentrates on an overview of Hebrew and common Hebrew greetings. WHEN: Monday, April 16th at 7:30 to 9:30 P.M. and following

# JEWISH AND GAY: Rapping the Rabbis

In this workshop we examine the history of Jewish Homophobia from Leviticus to contemporary rabbinical writings, discuss ways to reinterpret our legal and cultural tradition, and analyse the alternative approaches for relating to the total Jewish community. Wednesday, April 25th and following three Wednesdays 354 Coleridge in San Francisco. FACILITATOR: Mike Zimmerman.

米 COST: None, except cost of materials.

## COOKING THE CLASSICS

In chis one-day cooking workshop, each partitipant agrees to he resnondible for demonstrating or describing the prepara-

are: Suggestions of the foods prepared.

Cabbage Tcholent Streudel Stuffed Derma Pickled Fish Matza Balls Pita Bread Lebkuchen Latkes Kugel Shav Liver Gefilte Fish Hamantaschen Kreplach Chopped Knishes Felafel Hummus Carrot Pudding Chicken Soup Chess Tarts Borekas Borscht Challah Bagels

Grape Leaves Tabbauleh Tzimmes

WHEN: Sunday, May 13 from 11-5

WHERE: Any volunteers

COST: Each participant pays for his or her own materials

\* \*

## A JOG

This is a 2-hour jogging experience which includes the opportunity to exchange jogging experience with others, warm-up exercises, and 1-3 mile jog. Beginners as well as more advanced joggers of both sexes are heartily invited Sunday, May 27th from 10-12.

Stow Lake at Golden Gate Park. FACILITATOR: Ellis COST: None Jacobs. WHERE:

A JOG (no cost) SIGN ME UP FOR THE FOLLOWING COURSES: ( \* \* \* \*

)Survival Hebrew ( )Jewish and Gay ( )Cooking the Classics. My dish is

The cost and/or registration fee ( ) is enclosed ( ) will be paid at the first class

Phone	
A MF	

Yes

Member

St. San Francisco, 94110 354 Coleridge Committee Mail to: Education \*NOTE: Non-members are asked to pay a registration fee of \$1 for any class which meets 4 times or less and registration fee of \$2 for all others



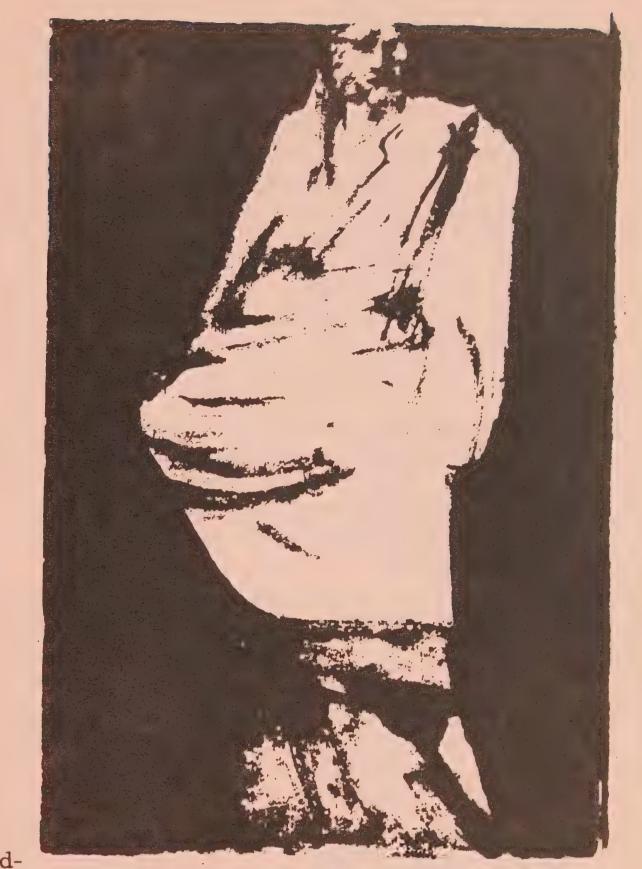
We observe Passover to remind ourselves of our bondage in Egypt and our liberation.

With the aid of God and
Moses we were freed from
our oppression. Our
people wandered in the
desert for forty years.
During that time a "free
nation" emerged from a
people which had been
enslaved for generations.
Only then did our 400-year
separation from the
Promised Land come to
an end.

During this wandering in the desert, the Children of Israel often found their faith wavering, as is shown by their building of the Golden Calf while Moses was on Mt. Sinai receiving the command-

ments. Many of the Israelites even wanted to return to Egypt, believing that "in Egypt we were slaves, but we knew where we stood." In spite of all their trials, Moses was able to keep the wanderers together and bring them to the Promised Land: to become the people Israel.

We as gay people can relate strongly to the Passover story. We, too, have been oppressed. Many of us today are afraid to let our identities be known. Like the wanderers in the desert, many of us have wondered if we weren't better off in the closet: we might have been oppressed, but at least we didn't have to struggle with new problems on the road to freedom. Just as the Israelites struggled to throw off the chains of



How many images . . the memory of Elijah stors m

## the fifth matzo

slavery, we as gay people are struggling to throw off the chains of oppression to become full members of society. And we are succeeding. We have broken away from the "slave mentality" of believing that homosexuality is an illness which set us apart from society and have learned to see ourselves as healthy individuals participating in a society of openness and freedom.

Just as Moses encouraged the Children of Israel to stay together during their forty years of wandering, so does Sha'ar Zahav support us as we strive to understand ourselves as Jews and gays.

We still observe the ancient admonishment that when we read the Passover story, we should read it as though we were slaves in Egypt. Unless we understand what it feels like to be slaves, we cannot appreciate what it is to be free. We, as gays, know enslavement from first-hand experience. We, as gay people, are determined to be free!

It has been traditional to have 3matzot at the Seder table, representing Cohen, Levi, and Israel. In recent years a 4th matza "The Matza of Hope" has been added to signify unity with oppressed Jews in Russia.

WE OF SHA'AR ZAHAV ASK THAT A FIFTH MATZA
"THE MATZA OF FREEDOM" be added to the previous four. To symbolize our DESIRE & DEMAND for basic human rights! We ask our
Kindred Congregations, and all Jews, Gay and Straight, friends and
families to take this fifth "Bread of our affliction" and pray:

BLESSED ARE YOU, ADONAI OUR GOD, SOVERIGN OF THE INFINITE. COMPASSIONATE CREATOR IN WHOSE IMAGE WE ARE ALL CREATED.

GRANT SIGHT TO THOSE WHO BLINDLY SEE ONLY THEMSELVES REFLECTED IN YOU. THEIR BLINDNESS CAUSES OUR PAIN!

MAY WE SEE PAST THE DISTORTED SELF-IMAGES
THRUST UPON US., & SEE OURSELVES IN YOUR LITE
WE ARE STRONG-WE ARE MYRIAD & PASSIONATE
WE ARE ONE & WE WILL BE FREE!!

amen

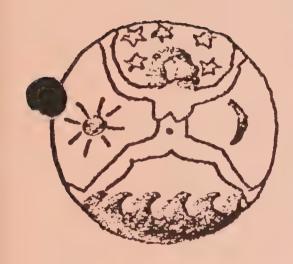
Dan-Rob-Shamir

PASSOVER MATZA COVER. Fringed, circular container with three compartments for the Matzot embroidered with a Magen David and the inscription: "You shall observe the Festival of the Matzot". Decorated with a crown and a floral wreath. Eastern Europe, 19th century.

## cakes for the queen of heaven

SPRING QUARTER

COURSE PURPOSE: To consider some possible relationships among ancient goddesses, feminist consciousness and New Religious Movements.



- \*\*What kinds of New Religious Movements are today's women creating and for what reasons?
- \*\*Why are ancient goddesses of importance to modern women?
- \*\*What light does modern archeology shed on psychological theories about the nature of women and men?
- \*\*Who was the Queen of Heaven for whom Jeremiah's people baked cakes and poured libations?

TEACHER: Shirley Ann Ranck, Ph.D.

SPONSOR: Program for the Study of New Religious Movements in America

TIME: Monday, 7:00 - 10:00

PLACE: Women's Center, 2479 LeConte, #1, Berkeley



## treasurer's report

I'd like to thank the members of Congregation Sha'ar Zahav for electing me Treasurer at the recent Congregational meeting. During my five months as acting Treasurer, this position has gradually become more involved and important. That's good! What that means is that one way members, congregants and friends of Sha'ar Zahav are showing they care for the future of the Synagogue is by making a financial contribution.

However, the present and future looks far more challenging. We are currently in the midst of re-negotiating our rental agreement at Dovre Hall/San Francisco Women's Building. We are sure of one thing...with the April 1st change in ownership, our rent will increase.

Discussion continues (while still at mostly an informal level), about beginning a fund raising campaign for the eventual purchase of our own home. However, please don't wait for an organized campaign to make a much needed and appreciated contribution to your Synagogue.

Shalom, Ron Lezell

ATTENTION ALL JOGGERS, RUNNERS, WALKERS, LIMPERS, AND CRAWLERS!

Sha'ar Zahav will begin its second season of organized fun runs in and about The City on Sunday, April 22, 1979. The site will be Stow Lake in Golden Gate Park at 10:00 A.M. sharp. The gently sloped, one mile lap is very scenic and inspiring.

All members, friends and family are encouraged to attend regardless of running experience.

See the Education Committee Bulletin in this newsletter for a one-day, two-hour jogging course to be held May 27th.

Ron Lezell

## letters to the editor

To the Editor

In the April issue of "Ms." is an article on strategy for the ERA, mentioning coalitions to be tapped for support. The

article included the following:

"One already solid pro-ERA coalition must not be undone and that's the one with the gay rights movement. The only legislators who tell you that it would help the ERA to unlink it from gay rights, says McLean (of the National Womens Political Caucus and of ERAmerica) are those using it as an excuse not to support you. The heartily pragmatic Carol Burris of the Women's Lobby points out that white gay male households are the best kind to have on your side -- two comparatively high incomes, no kids, time to volunteer, and an eradicable civil libertarian bottom line."

While on the one hand I think the Equal Rights Amendment is vitally important to all of us, on the other, Iwould wish responsible journalists and lobbyists to avoid the very same pitfalls of stereotyping which they condemn in others. Before I write to "Ms." I would appreciate some feedback. My telephone number is 668-7268; or you can write me c/o the editor.

Sally Gordon

### A letter to 26 members:

There has been a lot of anger and bitterness in the congregation during the last few months. Regrettably it reached a peak during the process in which the membership decided to appoint a rabbi.

Now that a few weeks have passed and my judgment is less clouded by emotion, it is easier to brush aside some of the rhetoric to examine the underlying issues.

Basically, my understanding is that those of you who opposed hiring a rabbi believed that somehow our action would undermine the ability of women to participate fully in the congregation. References were made throughout the meeting to the problem of "attitudes" among many of the men in the congregation which you apparently believe to be non-supportive of women's needs.

I believe that two separate issues became unfortunately intertwined. Many of us who supported the motion to appoint a rabbi are concerned about the evident frustration and anger you feel. I, for one, was not convinced by your argument that your frustration and anger would be ameliorated by defeating the motion. It seems clear to me, and to other to whom I have spoken, that the problem of "attitudes" will persist as long as feminism and sexism are issues in society at large. Obviously, those will be issues for a long time to come. In practical terms, the congregation has taken many concrete steps to overcome the traditional disabilities women have experienced in Judaism. As far as I can tell, the congregation is willing to do whatever is necessary to eliminate other institutionalized vestiges of sexism which may exist at Sha'ar Zahav. The congregation cannot, unfortunately, legislate against the "attitudes" of individual members. The only way those can be changed is by persuasion and example. That will take time. It can be done. To defer appointing a rabbi until these conflicts are resolved, however, appeared to me to amount to paralyzing all of our activities for what might turn out to be an indefinite period.

Everybody who joined the congregation undoubtedly had different reasons for doing so, and different agendas which they hoped to see the congregation address. A synagogue is an organization which is capable of focussing on multiple agenda items, not just a single one. We can do two or more things at the same time: we can even have a rabbi and still continue to be concerned about being supportive of women.

Furthermore, we have many other agendas to face, some of which I consider equally important as these two on which we recently have become fixated. To mention a few: We need to find a permanent home, especially because our tenancy at Dovre Hall after April is now in peril. We need to embark on a serious fund-raising campaign to accomplish this goal. Defeating Prop. 6 did NOT insure our civil rights. Proposed bills in the Legislature which would guarantee our rights have suffered setbacks. We need to continue working

to secure our rights. We want to forge links to the rest of the Jewish community, so that our congregation can be an integral part of the community, rather than being a fringe group. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, by any means, but all of these are important agendas, and I don't believe we have the luxury of addressing them one at a time. We need to progress on many fronts.

To achieve that progress will take a lot of effort and many people. We have a tremendous amount of work to do and we need all the help we can get. I appeal to those of you who were disappointed by the outcome of the vote on March 2nd not to withdraw as active members

## oneg

Special thanks to the following sponsors:

- March 9 Ron Lezell, Rob Montague and Daniel Chesir
- March 23 Dan Wylie, in honor of the opening of his play "A Little Night Music"
- April 6 Shamir Ophil and John in honor of their friendship
- April 13 Dr. A.G. Beauregard Lowell in honor of his mother's yahrzeit.
- April 20 Henry Rabinowitz and an anonymous donor in honor of Henry's recovery from a recent illness.

of the congregation. If you participate in a democratically run organization, it is inevitable that you will occasionally be on the losing side of a controversy. That is a poor reason to pick up all your marbles and go home, particularly if you feel as strongly about the organization as you evidently feel about Sha'ar Zahav. Furthermore, you would be mistaken if you interpret the result of the vote to mean that the majority was rejecting you personally or rejecting your concerns. At the most, I believe, those voting in favor of hiring a rabbi rejected the proposition that the issues were inextricably linked.

If you can accept the fact that in a group as diverse as ours it is unlikely that we will ever reach unanimity on controversial issues, please comeback and help Sha'ar Zahav move ahead. We are inevitably bound to disagree at times, but we also share many common concerns. Let us try to build on those things which unite us, rather than dwell on those which divide us. Above all, let us go forward: with the help of all members of the congregation, we can fulfill our limitless potential as an instrument of change.

Thalom,
Rob Montagne

## calendar of events

Apr	6	Evening Services 8:00 p.m.  Shabbat ha-Gadol * Torah portion, Tzav Lev, 6: 1-8:36 Special prophetic reading, Malachi 3:4-24.
Apr	11	First Seder this evening.
Apr	12	First day of Pesah (Passover) Congregation Sha'ar Zahev's second annual Passover Seder, Dovre Hall, 6:30 p.m.
Apr	13	Evening Services 8:00 p.m.  Hol Ha-Moed Pesah (intermediate day of Period * Special Torah reading, Ex.33:12-34:26,  Num. 28:19-25. Special prophetic reading,  Ezekiel 36:37 - 37:14.
Apr	20	Evening Services 8:00 p.m. Torah portion, Shemini, Lev. 9:1-11:47. Prophetic reading, II Samuel 6:1-7:17.
Apr	27	Evening Services 8:00 p.m.  Second Day of Rosh Hodesh.*Torah portion, Tazri'a-Metzora, Lev. 12:1-15:33. Special reading, Num. 28:9-15. Special prophetic reading Isaiah 66:1-24.
May	4	Evening Services 8:00 p.m.  Torah portion, Aharei Mot - Kedoshim, Lev. 16:1-20:27. Prophetic reading, Amos 9:7-15.

All Services at Dovre Hall, 3543 18th Street, San Francisco

